Thank you for reading this. I've been torn between wanting to share how much I still feel for you and not wanting to risk making you feel pressured or uncomfortable. If anything here feels overwhelming, I'm sorry. I hope I can share my feelings respectfully - for both of us - and leave you with a better impression than February, whatever you decide.

You said our split wasn't my fault, but knowing my mistakes and how things are between us, it's hard not to question that. I imagine there are things you wish had been different, or maybe we wouldn't have ended how we did. Still, hearing how overwhelming you found keeping up with everything, and you needing to be the opposite for Millie - I understand that stepping back may have felt like the only way forward to be the best mum, and I respect the decision you made.

I've reflected a lot on what you said - not just about your overwhelm, but also how my behaviour, mistakes and insecurities added to it. I haven't just felt sorry; I've tried to understand how I might've affected you and your relationship with Millie. This time has forced me to look inward and recognise my patterns. It's been humbling to see the kind of partner I was, and more importantly, the one I wasn't.

You gave so much of yourself – always listening, supporting, and caring for what I needed. I wish I'd done the same for you. My stubbornness, immaturity, insecurities, and misunderstanding of real support got in the way of what you deserved: care, empathy, patience, calm, and space.

I should've tried harder to give what you deserved - not just as my partner, but as a mum doing her best for Millie.

Instead, I protected my own insecurities and fears. I filled silences, relied too heavily on you, offloaded trivial matters, and was too intense - trying to manage things and rushing to fix them to feel needed. I interpreted your need for space as rejection and pushed harder out of fear. As a result, I overplanned and crammed our time, trying to make everything perfect instead of letting things unfold naturally and being fully present with you and Millie.

All of that - my fears, my need for reassurance, my overthinking - must've felt draining. It added pressure and likely left you feeling overwhelmed, exhausted, and disillusioned with our relationship.

I wish I'd realised sooner that real support isn't just about caring, offering help, or fixing things; it's about listening, understanding and giving what the other person needs. While you were working so hard to be everything for Millie, I was making things harder and not supporting you as I should've. Once I realised that, I knew I had to change.

I can't change the past, but I've changed because of it.

I won't go into every detail, but I've worked hard on the parts of me that got in the way before. You gave me the belief and encouragement I needed, and you and Millie were the reason I kept going (this even outshines your scrambled eggs in the thank-you stakes!). This was essential for my own wellbeing, and to become someone who can offer genuine calm, support, and love to the people I care about.

If there was ever another chance for us one day, I'd want to do it right this time by being a very different partner and person for both you and Millie.

I know life can feel overwhelming for you - like everything's piling up (including the ironing) and sometimes you feel like you're losing yourself. If we ever tried again, I wouldn't approach things with urgency, or a need to fix things to satisfy my own insecurities.

Instead, I'd focus on understanding and listening carefully to what you need - whether that means helping in small, practical ways, or just being calm and dependable. If it's silence or space, I'll take a step back and not react out of fear or rejection. I wouldn't judge you for forgetting things, feeling overwhelmed, or for having a tough day. I'd want you to feel safe and supported, this time, not based on my assumptions or what I think is right, but in ways that genuinely support you and feel right for the life you're building with Millie.

Life is already demanding. I now understand if you want to make a difference and be there for someone, it means meeting them exactly where they are, with what they need – not where I wish they were, or with what I think is best.

You know my flaws and challenges better than anyone. However, all I can do now is speak about the work I've done since and assure you that I'm not the same person I was.

I approach life differently now - less intensity, urgency, and desperation; more calm, appreciation, and understanding. I'll listen, respect your space and privacy, and support your independence - both emotionally and practically. I now have the confidence to make decisions without trying to make everything perfect or relying on your validation. Most importantly, I no longer look to you and Millie to complete me. I've found my own place and a stronger sense of who I am.

During our split, you said you felt guilty for not giving me what I needed - but I chose you.

I wanted our future, not because it was perfect or easy, but because of how I felt with you and Millie. I know that might sound overwhelming, maybe even a little scary, but to me, it shows how much I valued what we had - and how certain I was (and still am) about every part of you. You once asked why I didn't talk more about my parents' reaction to us. It hurt that they weren't more supportive, but I never wanted to burden you with that (ironic, given how often I shared trivial things). My love and commitment were never dependent on anyone else's opinion.

I've always loved you for who you are. Not just for the easy parts or good moments, but especially when things felt difficult. I know there were moments you felt messy or complicated - when you apologised for parts of yourself, hid them, or pushed me away. I saw those parts - they didn't just make me love you more; they made you endearing, precious, and real. I've said before I can't find the words to describe how special you are, but through every high and low, I was proud to call you my partner. No matter what happens now, I hope you know I love every part of the beautiful person you've always been.

Even if I ignore the freaky coincidences I've continued to have, I still believe you're my person. Everything we shared taught me so much - about love, resilience, vulnerability and even more so, about who I am and who I want to be. We weren't perfect; we both had our strengths and struggles. Even though we didn't always get everything right, I believe we brought real love and happiness into each other's lives. Beyond us, I believe that extended to Millie, and together we created something special for her too.

Gemma, this isn't about trying to sell myself or convince you. You were right to leave; I made things harder and failed to support you in the right ways - both as a partner and as a mum. I let you and Millie down, and I'm sorry for the pressure I added at a time when you needed more space, calm, and support. That regret sits with me, and I've worked hard to grow from it - not just for the hope of making things right, but because you both deserved better.

I imagine life's felt easier without me - more spare time, fewer demands, and one less person to consider. I get that. You've never needed anyone, and I've always admired that strength - but even someone as capable as you (dare I even say, cooler too), doesn't have to do this alone. The strongest people are worthy of real support too – the kind that eases pressure, not adds to it. That's what I'd offer now - not because you need it, but because you deserve it.

With the work I've done and the changes I've made, I believe that one day, I could be someone you'd want beside you – not someone you need, but someone you'd choose.

On Boxing Day, you said in an ideal world, you'd have a partner. You deserve a life where you never have to compromise being an amazing mum by having someone. I know what we had wasn't perfect, and I understand why stepping away made sense for you, but I still believe what we had isn't worth giving up on.

Your opinion has always mattered. I've listened, reflected and actively worked on the areas where I fell short. This has never been about short-term effort or quick fixes; my focus has been on giving you and Millie real, lasting quality change, rather than prioritising the urgency to achieve it.

In your absence, I've stayed consistent in my efforts. For example, in July, I graduated from my *Caring for Children and Young People* college course, completing 121 hours of study. After February, I never stopped any of the commitments I promised – not just out of hope for a future one day together - it was also about becoming the kind of partner, role model, and person that I believe I should be.

I owed that to you, to Millie, and to myself.

As I said in the main letter, the only thing I'd change is the pain I caused you. If you hadn't left me, I'd probably still be stuck in old habits. This time has allowed me to work on myself, and I'd rather face the pain of our split again, or even be apart, than have stayed together without making the changes you and Millie deserved.

I know 'I've changed' can sound cliché, but I respect you both too much for empty words.

Losing you was a turning point which forced me to face hard truths – it's been humbling, confronting and difficult - but necessary. Not having you in my life helped me realise what and who, really matters. I used to preach to you about the bigger picture, but it was me that failed to see it in the most important moments. I got bogged down and frustrated by trivial things - things that don't matter in the grand scheme - worse still, I offloaded them onto you when you were already carrying far more important burdens.

I was lucky with what I had, even if I didn't appreciate it at the time – and I'm not just talking about us, but about life in general. You not being there gave me the clarity I lacked. It pushed me to be appreciative, change, and to refocus my energy on important things, and the people who matter - the ones I hope to be better for in the future.

Annette recently gave me a big compliment – she said the person she sees now probably wouldn't have lost you. It's been a challenging year, but in that moment, I felt proud – like, for the first time, I'd understood how to love you in the right way. I see you and your world far more clearly now - even if it's too late to ever show it. I'm just sorry it took our split, the pain I caused, and so much time for me to finally get there.

I understand that things like the lodge weren't real without Millie, and they're not part of everyday life - and that's okay. I accept that my life may need to be quieter, less adventurous, even lonely at times. It's a small price to pay if it gives you the space and support you need to thrive - for your own happiness and to be the best mum to Millie.

It wouldn't always be easy, but I know exactly what I'd be choosing – only this time, I'm much better prepared for it. I won't get everything right, and I'll never be perfect - for you or anyone - but I'm committed to being someone who brings safety, calm, and trust into your life - never pressure, unease, or a failure to support again.

You have Millie, and she comes first. You don't need someone adding pressure or relying on you like I did before. I'd support you as Millie's mum first, and as my partner second – both in the ways that feel right to you.

I've learnt that being the right person for you isn't just about love or remembering you dislike words like 'din dins' and 'drinky poos', and that you like smoked sausage on pizza. It's about listening, respect, calm, patience, support, space, empathy - making life feel easier, not harder. That's who I am now.

I'm not asking for anything from you – not now, not ever – that doesn't feel right to you and Millie.

Even if some of what I've said resonates, I understand now might not be the right time to reopen communication. Millie needs consistency, and you're facing a lot - Millie starting school, changes at work, pressures of being a mum. I know how much all will demand of you.

Your relationship with Millie is the priority, and you deserve peace, stability, and space to be the best mum she needs - especially at such a critical time in her life. I also understand how overwhelming and mentally demanding career changes can be. I don't want to take any of your energy away from either of those things - they matter most.

I just want you to know that I love and care for you. I always will.

This love goes beyond my own hopes and desires, and your happiness will always matter more to me than my place in your lives.

So, all I ask is whenever you make this choice, it's based solely on what feels right for you and Millie. Please don't feel guilty, worry about what's best for me, or wonder if you can give me what I need. I've put the work in to become a more deserving partner because this is where I want to be - on good days, hard days, and everything in between. I chose you, knowing things wouldn't always be perfect or easy, and you remain my choice - now and always.

If life ever feels a little less overwhelming, or if you feel I could be your person again - the partner you and your mum once believed I could be - I'll always be ready.

Likewise, if you decide it can't be me, I'm sorry we couldn't make things work and your silence will say everything.

I'll always be grateful for being a small part of your life, and if our paths ever cross again, even just in passing, I hope we can at least share a smile that reminds us of what we once meant to each other, the future we once imagined, and the real love we shared.

Whatever happens, whenever you decide, I promise I'll fully respect it.

A few months ago, I would've given anything for a quick resolution and to resume a future with you and Millie. I now see that kind of hope places unfair pressure on both of us. With time and reflection, my mindset and priorities have changed.

Selfishly, I hope the love I have - and the commitment behind my changes - mean more to you than my past mistakes, and that maybe one day you'll give me the chance to make things right for you and Millie. But even more than that wish, is for you to know how sorry I am for my mistakes, and how grateful I am for everything you gave me.

I've always valued the friendship we had as much as the love - I hope this message respects both.

However things end between us, someone as special as you deserves to know they're valued, loved and worth every effort possible.

I'll always hope you find someone who can provide this, and makes it work with you and Millie - someone who makes you feel loved, happy, and supported in all the ways that matter most to you both.

You deserve that kind of love more than anyone I know - and no matter what happens, you'll always have mine.